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Inside Information

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COSDA HOLDS ANNUAL MEETING IN DENVER

Communication Officers of State Departments of Agriculture holds its annual meeting and workshops in Denver, Colo., Dec. 2-4.

Mark Randal, COSDA president and press secretary for the Illinois Department of Agriculture, has revealed an action-packed three days.

Cy Carpenter, president of the National Farmers Union, will give the keynote address at the Sunday evening banquet.

A stress management session will be sponsored by the American Farm Bureau Federation on Monday morning.

John Ochs, press secretary to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block, will speak to the group on Monday, to be followed by a panel of leading television, radio, newspaper and news wire service representatives, who will discuss agricultural journalism and public relations.

The Central Bank of Cooperatives, the nation's "largest agricultural lender," will host the Tuesday luncheon. Wayne Anderson, international affairs official with the bank, will speak.

A visit to the Monfort Cattle Industries operations at Greeley is planned for Monday afternoon.

Workshops on Sunday and Tuesday will include discussions on information support plans for the 1985 Food Expo sponsored by the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service; use of electronic mail for messaging among states and between states and USDA and other organizations; and hands-on demonstration of lap model microcomputers

The usual important reports from individual states and USDA also are scheduled.

The conference will be held at the Denver Hilton, call (303) 893-3333 for reservations. Room rates are \$42 for a single, \$48 for a double.

FARM POLICY 'CROSSROADS' SLIDES RELEASED

"U.S. Farm Policy at a Crossroad," a 15-minute 3-second slide show designed to provide background material for discussions on the 1985 Farm Bill, has been made available on a lending basis without charge by USDA.

Its introduction clarifies its contents: It is NOT the story of U.S. agriculture. It looks at a specific set of policies and programs which account for the bulk of farm programs spending but which involve only a few basic commodities, such as wheat, rice, cotton and feedgrains.

It does NOT cover dairying, hogs, beef cattle, poultry, soybeans, fruits or vegetables--which receive no direct federal payments.

The slide show is not for sale. Several USDA agencies will have copies of it, however.

The 97-slide show was produced by the Photography Division of USDA's Office of Information. It is accompanied by a synchronized narration, but not a printed narrative guide. That means a synchronizing cassette player, as well as a standard slide projector, are essential to its use.

Anyone wishing to borrow a copy may contact Donnell Royster, Economics Management Staff Information Office, Room 0054-S, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, or call (202) 447-2078.

ARS FIELD INFORMATION STAFF HOLDS MEETING

Computer links and research information coordination are key topics as the heads of information field offices of USDA's Agricultural Research Service meet Nov. 26-28 with Hubert Kelley, director of ARS' information staff, in Beltsville, Md.

After their installation in mid-December, Sperry Corporation personal computers will link the field offices in New Orleans, La., Berkeley, Calif., and Peoria, Ill., with the national office in Beltsville.

The computers, Kelley said, will be compatible with various systems (such as the ITT Dialcom system used by other USDA agencies, land grant universities and state departments of agriculture) and be linked to a 240 megabyte storage bank of ARS information data at Beltsville.

In addition to learning how to use their new network, the information heads is meeting with ARS national program staff to discuss coordinating information about similar research going on in various parts of the country.

They also discussing the major research stories that are expected to come up in the next six months.

NEW YORK MILK PROMOTION FILM PRODUCED

Cornell University's Media Services believes the university's new 16mm color film, "Milk and Honey," which focuses on the New York milk promotion program and how the promotion funds are collected and spent, may be of interest to dairy industry leaders throughout the country.

A contact is Susan S. Lang at (607) 256-2090.

Also available on videocassette, the film may be bought from the Department of Agricultural Economics, Warren Hall, Cornell University Ithaca NY 14853, or rented from the Cornell Audiovisual Center, 8 Research Park, Ithaca, NY 14850.

GEORGIA HAS TWO OPENINGS FOR EDITORS

Randall Cofer, chairman of the Communications Division of the Cooperative Extension Service at the University of Georgia, is looking for both a news editor and a publications editor at Athens.

To insure consideration, inquiries must be received by Dec. 13.

The news editor's job is covered in position announcement No. 3227.

Major responsibilities for that job include developing, writing and editing news and feature articles for the print media, plus taking photographs.

The publications editor's position is covered in announcement No. 3228.

Major responsibilities include coordinating the complete editorial function for extension, research and special publications.

Inquiries should be addressed to Randall Cofer, Chairman, Communications Division, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602. His Dialcom mailbox is AGS603; telephone number is (404) 542-2561.

OKLAHOMA STATE SEEKS BROADCAST COORDINATOR

Applications are being accepted until a suitable candidate is found for the position of senior broadcast coordinator at Oklahoma State University.

This individual will produced news, special features and educational documentaries for consumer and agricultural audiences, working with a nationally recognized field production unit and state-of-the-art equipment.

A resume and samples should be send to Charles N. Voyles, Head, Agricultural Information Services, 102 Public Information Building, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078. His Dialcom electronic mailbox is AGS1900; his telephone number is (405) 624-6886.

ANIMALS TO HELP INTRODUCE AG YEARBOOK

Animals will help introduce USDA's 1984 Yearbook of Agriculture, "Animal Health: Livestock and Pets," at ceremonies scheduled for The Mall in Washington, D.C.; on Dec. 20.

A promotion committee headed by Larry Marton, public affairs specialist in the Special Programs Division of USDA's Office of Information, has lined up the following certain attention-getters at a special media event:

A sheep-herding Collie from Virginia will be working not only sheep but also ducks for visitors. An American Bald Eagle, said to be one of the few in captivity outside of a zoo, will be shown on its keeper's arm; it can't fly because of a crushed wing.

Champion dogs (including a rare example from the Orient, a Shitzu) will demonstrate how dogs are asked to behave at breed shows. At least one National Park Service horse and rider will demonstrate crowd control.

Veterinarians will be on hand to discuss the care and handling of pet puppies, kittens, birds and other creatures. Some 4-H members will present a show-and-tell on commercial livestock care.

The Yearbook of Agriculture is expected to be available soon after the first of the year. Free copies are available from U.S. Senators and Representatives, or they may be purchased for \$10 from the Superintendent of Documednts in Washington, D.C.

TECHNOLOGY EMPHASIZED AT PRSA CONFERENCE

More than 1,200 public relations practitioners attending the 37th national convention of the Public Relations Society of America recently had the fullest program of communications technology briefings of any PRSA convention yet.

A large number of high-tech seminars, workshops and demonstrations showed how far ahead public relations has moved in just one year in recognizing and using the new technology.

While traditional skills of good writing and clear thinking will remain important to public relations, the practitioners need to be aware of technology changes, ready to learn high-tech applications and willing to call on experts for help, one speaker said.

A business functions analyst for AT&T told the conferees that news media are more willing to get news from corporations (and presumably from governments and institutions) through the new technology channels.

Of media outlets surveyed, 63 percent (mostly radio stations) said they would call a toll-free 800 number for news, 70 percent would listen to a news teleconference and 49 percent would take news from an organization's computerized data base. Those who said they wouldn't said they didn't have the equipment to access a data base.

HOME VIDEOTEX SERVICES EXPANDING

Home videotex services, often touted as the communications rage of the future, are spreading to different parts of the nation.

The newest videotex service was launched recently by the Times Mirror Company in Orange County, Calif., first use of the system in the West.

A similar system has been operated by the Knight-Ridder Newspapers for nearly a year in southern Florida. Another will be launched this month in the Chicago area.

Subscribers can, among other things, read parts of a newspaper the night before it is delivered, transfer funds and pay bills electronically, order merchandise shown on their screens, and send and get electronic mail messages.

They also have quick access to thousands of pages of consumer-oriented services.

Agricultural communications also are going via videotex. "Grassroots America" service was launched in the Del-Mar-Va area of Delaware, Maryland and Virginia several weeks ago. That service is operated by three large farm cooperatives in conjunction with the Times Mirror Company and some Canadian publishers.

The agricultural videotex service offers instant news and market information, page at a time, along with full color graphics (such as weather maps).

INSIDE INFORMATION is published for distribution to public affairs and information staff members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, its agencies, State Departments of Agriculture and Land Grant Universities. Any items, comments and inquiries should be addressed to either John Crowley or Nancy Bevis, Office of Information, Room 536A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250 or to AGR009 mailbox on the Dialcom system, or call (202) 447-7454.

